

# Strategic Instruction Model Adolescent Literacy Program

More than 8 million adolescents have failed to master the literacy skills they need to succeed in school or compete for jobs. The SIM Adolescent Literacy Program, a powerful, research-proven framework for effective literacy instruction, provides the solid base of skills these students need to become proficient readers and writers. The program, encompassing all of the essential ingredients embodied in proficient reading and writing, helps students build a repertoire of strategies and skills to approach the difficult demands of secondary school.

The SIM Adolescent Literacy Program involves two main reading components: a reading instruction core that helps students develop accurate word recognition and increased fluency and a linguistic comprehension instruction core that teaches the skills and strategies needed to bring meaning to reading.

The program also includes instruction in writing strategies. Not only do students learn to read a variety of text structures (e.g., sequence, description, compare and contrast, cause and effect, problem/solution) using several

related and mutually supportive strategies, but they also learn to write those text structures.

All instruction is provided in an environment that promotes and motivates learning.

Supports are in place to focus student behavior and attention on relevant academic work. The social skills to be used in cooperative groups or partnership activities are taught explicitly, and students participate in the Possible Selves Program, in which they analyze their current lives and then set and work toward goals to enhance their future lives.

## Essentials for proficient reading

- Alphabetics and phonics skills
- Fluency skills
- Advanced decoding strategies
- Vocabulary knowledge
- Comprehension strategies
- Metacognitive skills (thinking and problem solving)



## In the SIM classroom

The SIM Adolescent Literacy Program is a structured year-long course that allows for highly individualized instruction in targeted strategies as well as large-group activities. Depending on the needs of students, instruction involves both teacher-led whole-group discussions and guided-practice activities, as well as lessons in which students work independently at stations set up throughout the classroom. Station activities might include the following:

- At one station, the teacher may meet with one student to measure his or her progress while a pair of students practice a targeted reading strategy aloud.
- At a second station, students work individually at computers using the interactive hypermedia programs that support reading instruction.
- At a third station, pairs of students engage in fluency activities.
- At a fourth station, students design memory aids and study cards for vocabulary words and test each other over the words.
- At a fifth station, students practice a strategy independently, take a test, or complete another activity related to integrating several strategies simultaneously, adapting a strategy, or applying a strategy to subject-area assignments.

All instruction involves high-interest reading materials that have been chosen to ensure that they engage students and address their academic needs.

Progress measures are gathered as part of instruction for each strategy. These data allow



the teacher to make decisions with regard to when a student has mastered a strategy. Scores for each practice session are plotted on a progress chart graph, and the student and teacher discuss the student's progress and goals for future practice attempts.

## Expected outcomes

Students who complete the SIM Adolescent Literacy Program will have the reading and writing skills needed to respond to the demands of challenging required courses in high school. They will be more likely to complete those courses successfully, pass minimal competency tests, and graduate from high school, ready and able to enroll and succeed in future education and training opportunities.

## Learn more at these web sites

• [www.kucrl.org/literacy](http://www.kucrl.org/literacy) • [www.instructionalcoach.org](http://www.instructionalcoach.org)



# Content

**Motivation and behavior.** Students learn how they are expected to act in the classroom and how to create a productive learning community. Instruction includes teaching a repertoire of appropriate behaviors for such classroom situations as lecture/discussions, independent work, and small group work.

**Advanced phonics and decoding.** Students learn a strategy specifically designed for decoding multisyllabic words. Other instruction is individualized to meet students' needs.

**Fluency.** The Fluency Program involves explicitly teaching and modeling for students how to read fluently. Students repeatedly read passages aloud with partners and track the number of words read accurately per minute.

**Vocabulary.** Students learn several memory strategies designed to help them identify vocabulary words and learn and remember the meaning of those words.

**Comprehension.** Students learn to use the foundational reading comprehension strategies of imagery, summarization, prediction, questioning, and monitoring.

**Thinking and problem solving.** All of the instructional programs associated with the SIM Adolescent Literacy Program contain elements that promote independent thinking and problem solving, including steps related to monitoring whether responses make sense, checking for understanding, and correcting errors.

**Technology.** Interactive hypermedia instructional programs augment SIM strategy instruction. Some of the programs provide additional instruction and practice, others teach students such skills as how to use spellcheckers.

**Writing.** Two SIM writing strategies—the Paragraph Writing Strategy and the Theme Writing Strategy—are closely aligned with reading instruction. Both focus on a process-writing approach in which students learn how to plan, write, provide or accept feedback on their writing, and edit their writing.

## Supporting success

Educational change requires both high-quality teaching methods and materials and sustained professional development in the use of those tools. The staff of the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning (KU-CRL) is prepared to foster success as your school implements the SIM Adolescent Literacy Program.

Members of KU-CRL's International Professional Development Network who are highly experienced in using and teaching others about SIM interventions will provide instruction and support to teacher participants during and after an intensive, five-day summer institute built on four principles:

1. **Model and incorporate instructional practices.** Institute leaders will model skills and procedures. Then, participants will have an opportunity to practice these skills and procedures.
2. **"Yeah But" problem solving.** Time and mechanisms will be built into each day's activities to allow concerns, objections, and "yeah buts" to surface, so solutions can be found.
3. **Individual planning and goal setting.** A small leader-to-participant ratio in the institute will allow ample time for individual meetings to address each participant's unique issues.
4. **Continuing learning.** All participants in the institute will have complete access to a host of support materials and systems offered by KU-CRL, including access to online chats, monthly newsletters on implementation suggestions, and use of videotapes, CDs, and print resources from KU-CRL's extensive professional development library. A certified professional developer will visit them to provide assistance and support.



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